

is at least as necessary as resolution. The prince must be worthy of his post, and must win acceptance from his subjects if not their love. " Better than any number of fortresses is not to be hated by your people." His whole duty is to save, to strengthen and to maintain the state.

Whether the ship is steered by a hereditary monarch or a dictator, an aristocracy, a parliament or a committee of public safety, is irrelevant., Machiavelli is primarily interested, not in the forms of government, but in the way it is carried on. Governance is a problem of strength and skill, not of ethics and law, A regime must be judged, not by intentions, but by the fruits of its policy. Of such notions as the *Respublica Christiana*^ the unity of civilization, allegiance to humanity, joint responsibility for the welfare of the world, there is not a trace. *Virtu > Fortuna, Necessita* : here was the new trinity which Machiavelli substituted for the Christian creeds. Each political unit, large or small, must think solely of itself. The morals of the jungle are exalted into a philosophy of life. Anticipating Nietzsche he complains that Christianity is the religion of the weak. The author of *The Prince* was certainly no worse a man than his contemporaries in the courts and cabinets of the Renaissance, and indeed he modelled his technique on the experiences of his own career. But the horror with which plain citizens heard of his counsels is suggested by the fact that " Old Nick," though already a familiar *alias* for the devil, came to be associated with his name; that *The Prince* was called the Devil's Catechism or the Ten Commandments Reversed; that the adjective " Machiavellian " is still in use all over the world to denote the stratagems of statecraft at its worst. That he denounced bad rulers in his larger work, the *Discourses on Uiy*> and confessed that the practice of

breaking the laws for good ends lent a colour
to breaches
committed for bad ends, has been overlooked.
It is by *The*
Prince that he stands or falls.

While plain men were shocked by the
repudiation not only
of Christian ethics but of the ordinary maxims of
honourable
dealing, the great ones of the earth took the
little book to
their hearts. It spoke a language they could
understand.
Here was a breviary for rulers, full of shrewd
hints and
warnings, compiled by the keenest political
brain of the age.
It appeared, moreover, at the psychological
moment, for the
mediaeval structure had collapsed. The Middle
Ages were
saturated with universalism. No theoretical
distinction